

Special Meeting
South Orange-Maplewood
Board of Education
March 4, 2015

A Special Meeting of the Board of Education of South Orange-Maplewood was held in the District Meeting Room at the Administration Building, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, New Jersey, on March 4, 2015.

Board Wayne Eastman called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Adequate written notice of this meeting of the South Orange-Maplewood Board of Education was sent to the Township and Village Clerks, the Libraries, The Star Ledger, the News Record and all schools.

ROLL CALL: Present: Ms. Baker, Mr. Bennett, Mrs. Daugherty, Mr. Eastman, Ms. Jones, Mrs. Lawson-Muhammad, Ms. Pai, Ms. Smith, Mrs. Wright

Absent: Ms. Kritzberg

9 VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

DISCUSSION

2015-16 Preliminary Budget - Mrs. Schneider

Mrs. Schneider provided a powerpoint presentation that included the following information:

- Review of the Budget Development Process
- Tax Levy Cap Adjustments and Banked Cap
- Estimated Tax Impact at 2% Operating Budget Increase
- Revenues Proposed 2015-16 Budget
- Budget Considerations in the Proposed Budget
- Expense Adjustments and Reductions
- Expenses Proposed 2015-16 Budget
- Expense Adjustments and Reductions
- Estimated Tax Impact with \$330,000 Tax Cap Adjustment

[presentation is on file in Board Secretary's office and on district website]

Presentation was followed by discussion among Board members including the following topics:

- Clarification on the use of capital reserve
- Questions about reference reorganization of administration

- Concerns about continuous impact on elementary schools where we should be making the first actions to address the achievement gap
- Disappointed about reduction of Elementary World Language
- Physical education credit for High School sports
- Montrose can be revenue if we bring Out of District student back in District
- International Baccalaureate program can be cut to save other programs
- Consider sacred cows such as Marshall/Jefferson pairing
- Status of the evaluation of health benefit alternatives
- Look at cutting administrators and get more staff in the classroom
- Proposed pension reform and impact on the District budget
- Discussion about tax level - budgeting for 2% at operating budget, or using \$330,000 of tax adjustment for a 2% increase including debt service.
- Discussion regarding having the auditor return to discuss the budget and use of funds

HEARING OF INDIVIDUALS AND DELEGATIONS

Dionne Williams
Maplewood Board should acknowledge that the funds are dependent on taxpayers who are heavily burdened. Also commented on funds that should have been returned but the Board did not act.

Mike Donnelly
SEPAC Supports the use of the tax cap adjustment. Appreciate restraint in raising tax levy in the past but need to recognize the enrollment increase

Steve Latz
Maplewood CBAC Clarified content of pension reform. Asked about budget materials to be made available before next week's budget forum. Asked about scheduled class size at Seth Boyden, Columbia and at the elementary schools. Also commented on transparency and questioned what documents Mrs. Wright has requested but has not received.

Mrs. Daugherty commented on the public comment regarding funds being returned. The reference was to funds properly reported in the audit, but the state was reducing state aid to offset state funding shortfalls.

FUTURE MEETINGS - Read by Mr. Eastman

The Board of Education will hold a Community Forum at 7:30 pm on Thursday, March 12, 2015 in the District Meeting Room, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ 07040 to discuss the 2015-16 preliminary budget. No action will be taken.

The Board of Education will meet in Closed Session on Monday, March 16, 2015 at 6:30pm in the Superintendent's Office to discuss personnel and legal issues, negotiations and other matters to be announced at a later date. Immediately following the Closed Session, the Board of Education will meet in Public Session at 7:30pm in the District Meeting Room, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ. Action will be taken.

Motion made by Mrs. Daugherty, seconded by Ms. Pai, that the Board of Education move to Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent Search, the matters to be announced at a later date. Motion unanimously approved.

MOTION made by Ms. Pai, seconded by Ms. Smith, that the Board of Education adjourn. Motion unanimously approved at 9:35 p.m.

Cheryl Schneider, Board Secretary